

Governor's Upper Yellowstone River Task Force  
Meeting Summary  
October 19, 2000  
City/County Community Room  
Meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

I. Introductions

Members Present:

John Bailey, Chair  
Mike Atwood, Vice Chair  
Roy Aserlind  
David Haug

Brant Oswald  
Jerry O'Hair  
Bob Wiltshire  
Ellen Woodbury

Others Present:

Allan Steinle, Ex-Officio  
Stan Sternberg, Ex-Officio  
Terri Marceron, Ex-Officio  
Laurence Siroky, Ex-Officio  
Liz Galli-Noble, Coordinator  
Amy Miller, Administrative Secretary

Max Christian  
Jeanne-Marie Souvigney  
Jen Elliott  
Jim Robinson  
Paul Hook  
Chuck Dalby  
David Cowan

Tom Olliff  
Ed Schilling  
Karl Biastoch  
Lionel Dicharry  
Burt Williams  
Leanne Roulson

II. Prior Meeting Minutes

The September 19, 2000 minutes were approved as written.

III. Financial Updates

1. Grant Spending Report:

Amy Miller reported on the following to the Task Force:

<i>EXPENDED GRANTS</i>			
Grant Name	Completed	Amount	Study Component
DNRC Watershed Planning Assistance Grant	6-30-99	2,100.00	Physical Features Inventory
DNRC HB223 Grant	7-30-99	10,000.00	Aerial Photography
DNRC Riparian/Wetlands Educational Grant	6-30-00	960.99	Hydrologic Response to The 1988 Fires
DEQ 319 Grant (1 <sup>st</sup> )	9-30-00	40,000.00	Coordinator Position
<i>CURRENT GRANTS</i>			
Grant Name	Amount	Spent	Remaining Balance
DEQ Start-Up Grant	49,138.00	23,737.28	25,400.72
DNRC RDGP Grant	299,940.00	158,895.67	141,044.33
DEQ 319 Grant (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	58,000.00	4,621.84	53,378.16
DNRC HB223 (Riparian Trend Analysis Study)	6,500.00	0	6,500.00
DNRC Watershed Planning Assistance Grant (Upland Study)	10,000.00	993.60	9,006.40

2. Funding Updates

A. 319 Grant Application Reivew

The 319 Grant hearing was September 29, 2000 in Helena. John Bailey, Daryl Stutterheim (Park CD), and Amy Miller were present at the hearing. The grant re-write was due on October 17, 2000. If anyone needs a copy of the modified grant contact Liz Galli-Noble.

B. Reclamation and Develop Grant Program (RDGP)

The Task Force had submitted a RDGP grant to DNRC earlier this year, and the grant application was not recommended for funding. The Park Conservation District had received a letter stating this information.

C. Resource Reclamation Grant (RRG)

The Task Force had submitted a RRG grant to DNRC earlier this year, and the grant application was recommended for funding (#59 position-low priority).

IV. Research Team Presentations

Chuck Dalby (DNRC) presented a progress report on the work that he and Jim Robinson are doing on historic channel changes and geomorphology of the Upper Yellowstone River. The overall project has four objectives:

1. River Channel and Floodplain Mapping
2. Geomorphic Channel Classification
3. Map and Analyze Historic Channel Changes
4. Analysis of Cumulative Effects

Fieldwork on the project started in September 1999 and, to date, has focused on channel mapping and channel classification.

Geomorphic classification of the Upper Yellowstone River provides a framework for understanding the relationship between the form and condition of the channel and the physical and biological processes that shape and maintain its bed, banks and island complexes. The reconnaissance-level classification also provides a basis for identifying homogeneous channel segments, assessing relative vertical and lateral channel stability, and identifying geomorphic strata (that is, similar channel types) from which representative samples can be extracted for detailed study.

Reconnaissance-level classification of the channel from Gardiner to Springdale is being delineated at a 1:12000 scale (5.28 inches = 1 mile) through air-photo interpretation and field reconnaissance. Ortho-photos quads, recently completed by the U.S. Forest Service, are being used as the base for mapping. Several classification schemes (Rosgen, Montgomery-Buffington, and Nanson-Croke) are being used and applied in cooperation with Dr. Mike Merigiano (Riparian Study). More refined channel classification will be developed for the detailed study segment (Point of Rocks to Mission Creek), based on higher resolution channel mapping and field description of fluvial features.

Chuck's presentation described the data required for classification (for example, channel pattern, channel shape, slope, sediment size) and the methods used to collect it. He also pointed out the close relationship between the glacial history of the area and the current day distribution of different types of channels and how "stable" or "unstable" they are. Future work includes continued description of channel-bed sediment, detail mapping of selected channel areas, and interpretation of historic channel changes.

V. Socio-Economic Subcommittee

Mike Atwood, Socio-Economic Subcommittee Chair, updated the Task Force on the Request for Proposal (RFP) that the subcommittee has been developing over the past four months. The comments from the last Task Force meeting made it clear that the Task Force is not going to do the NEPA portion of the study; therefore, the subcommittee modified the RFP to reflect that decision. As Task Force members reviewed the modified RFP, Mike Atwood explained that Phase I of the study (the modified RFP presented) will produce base line socio-economic information to be used by the Task Force when developing river management recommendations.

Alan Steinle reported that the US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) would take information from Phase I and focus more sharply on bank stabilization effects in Phase II of the study. Alan Steinle reported that Phase I is much broader in focus than is needed by the Corps; however, the Corps can build on that baseline information. Alan discussed the need for timely data sharing with the Corps, and that the Corps would require access to data throughout the process, of course with Task Force approval. The Corps may be able to help fund Phase I through their Section 22 Program, which requires a 50 percent cost share of non-federal funds. If the Corps does help fund Phase I, the contractor would need to meet Corps expectations. The Corps mechanism for working with contractors would be used. This would mean that the Task Force would give up some contractual control.

At the last Task Force meeting Liz requested that comments/edits about the RFP be made through her. She received one from a Technical Advisory Committee member, which she incorporated into the modified RFP presented at this meeting (edits were denoted by italics).

The RFP is intended for a broad range of applicants: a qualified firm, organization, individual, or persons. The subcommittee's intent is to have the socio-economic study look at present social and economic make up of Park County, as well as its history (changes and trends). The study will not do projection into the future. Although the Task Force will not be the lead in Phase II, they are willing to provide input whenever appropriate.

Bob Wiltshire made the motion to approve the modified RFP and "word smithing" on page 6. Roy Aserlind seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The subcommittee will meet again and work to get the RFP released as quickly as possible.

#### VI. Outreach and Education Activities Updates

The Office of Management and Budget is touring the Upper Yellowstone and the Corps is hosting the tour. The Task Force was invited as guests to participate on this October 30, 2000 tour.

The Technical Advisory Committee wants to meet more frequently; their next meeting will be on November 3, 2000 in Helena.

Anyone who wishes to have the Task Force present information to their group, please contact Liz Galli-Noble at #222-3701.

#### VII. Wildlife Assessment

John Bailey and Liz Galli-Noble explained that there is a need to revisit the Wildlife Assessment. In May 2000, two grant applications were submitted to fund the Wildlife Assessment: the RDGP and RRG Grants. One application was not recommended for funding at all, and the other grant received a very low priority ranking: 59<sup>th</sup> out of 61 applications. Comments from the grant reviewers were that the Wildlife Study proposal was "weak," which diminished the entire application's ranking. In addition, the USGS—BRD, who had originally written the wildlife proposal, were no longer interested in doing the work. Liz Galli-Noble shared these comments with John Bailey and Dr. Duncan Patten (TAC Chair).

In the mean time, other interested parties had already expressed interest in working on the wildlife assessment, so given the situation Dr. Patten pursued them. One of those interested was Dr. Andy Hansen at Montana State University. The TAC met on September 26, and a new concept for the Wildlife proposal was brought forward by Dr. Patten.

That draft proposal was presented to the Task Force for review. They were then asked to comment and provide

guidance to the TAC concerning this issue. Discussion included the following comments:

Allan Steinle commented that the Task Force needs a more creditable proposal, basically with the same output as the original, but a stronger approach. The new proposal would address the weaknesses of the old proposal (scientifically weak, watered down, broad based).

The new proposal would involve more landowners (25 sites). However, it would be less intrusive than the original proposal because the information would be based on a database that Dr. Hansen has built over many years.

If the USGS has backed out and will not do study—the old study is dead. We have no choice but to pursue a new concept.

The Task Force wants to hear more details from Dr. Hansen at a future meeting.

The chair polled all of the Task Force members for comment on the new Wildlife proposal. All agreed that a new proposal is needed and a formal motion was made to ask the Technical Advisory Committee to develop a new Wildlife Assessment proposal based on the draft presented at this meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

#### VIII. Coordinated Yellowstone River Effort Updates

The Rapid Aerial Assessment video was completed on September 14, 2000. Warren Kellogg, DNRC, is finishing the project. Tom Pick, NRCS/DEQ, reported that the video product is very good.

Liz reported that she, John Bailey, and Dr. Patten would attend the Yellowstone Roundtable on October 25, 2000. Liz was asked to do a presentation on the Task Force at that meeting and encouraged other Task Force members to attend.

#### IX. Schedule Future Task Force Meetings

Liz Galli-Noble would like Task Force members to call her at 222-3701 if they will be unable to attend scheduled meetings.

Next Task Force meetings are:

Tuesday, November 28, 2000 at the Yellowstone Inn

Thursday, December 12, 2000 at the Yellowstone Inn

#### X. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

**PLEASE MAKE NOTE THAT THE NOVEMBER MEETING DATE AND LOCATION HAS CHANGED TO NOVEMBER 28, 2000 AT THE YELLOWSTONE INN!**

